

Central Intelligence Agency

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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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Poland: Near Term Assessment

Summary

As a result of its clear victory over the Solidarity underground, the Polish regime last month suspended martial law and released most internees. There is no reason to believe, however, that in the coming months the nervous, security-minded authorities will ease their safeguards against resistance activities or against possible spontaneous disorders stemming from the poor economic situation. Jaruzelski realizes that the population remains deeply alienated, but his efforts at administrative and economic reform have been limited and ineffective. There is probably a considerable gap between the maximum that he is willing to offer in search of social accord and the minimum that Polish society could find acceptable. We believe that the enhanced role of the security services and continuing concern over internal security will hinder any improvement in Poland's relations with the West. In particular, Warsaw seems in no mood now to make conciliatory gestures to the US. [redacted]

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This memorandum was requested by Stanley Moskowitz, NIO/USSR/EE, for Deputy Assistant Secretary Mark Palmer, USSR/EE/Yugoslavia, Department of State. It was prepared by [redacted] East European Division, Office of European Analysis. Comments and questions are welcome and should be addressed to [redacted] Chief, East European Division, EURA, [redacted]

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Since martial law was imposed on 13 December 1981, Poland's military ruler Wojciech Jaruzelski has clearly shown the will and the ability to suppress organized resistance. In recent months, the regime has felt confident enough of its strength and its control of internal security to make several conciliatory gestures:

- On 8 November, following a meeting between Archbishop Glemp and Jaruzelski, it was announced that Pope John Paul II would visit Poland next summer.
- On 14 November, in the wake of Solidarity's failure to mount significant strikes protesting the union's dissolution, Lech Walesa was released from internment.
- On 23 December all the remaining internees were released, except for seven union leaders who were formally arrested the same day.
- On 30 December martial law was "suspended;" regime officials have hinted at eventual clemency for some who remain in jail for martial law offenses.



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Although these gestures can be interpreted as steps toward meeting Western demands for the easing of sanctions, several of the moves were taken to meet the tactical interests of the regime. Announcement of the Papal visit, for instance, was a regime effort to ensure the Church's cooperation in preventing strikes on 10 November and was made contingent on the existence of calm in the country. Many Church leaders are still uncertain whether the Pope will actually come. Additionally, the release of Walesa was intended largely to remove a symbol of defiance and a potential rallying point for domestic protests 

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At the same time, the authorities have taken other measures to control would-be protestors and to retaliate against foreign critics, primarily in the US:

- On 8 October, Poland's parliament (the Sejm) passed a new trade union law explicitly delegitimizing Solidarity and providing the authorities with numerous controls over future trade unions.

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- On 26 October, the Sejm passed a so-called "antiparasitism" law which can be used to punish regime critics.
- Released internees have been systematically harassed and in some cases urged to leave the country. On 16 December, Walesa was detained for nine hours to prevent him from speaking at ceremonies commemorating the deaths of workers in 1970 and 1981.
- In mid-December, VOA and BBC medium wave broadcasts were jammed for about one week, probably to prevent the spread of information about Walesa's planned speech. The authorities later "apologized" to the British.
- On 14 December, the regime retaliated for US actions it disliked by cutting off scientific and cultural contacts arranged through USIA.
- Several thousand individuals remain in jail under arrest or convicted of martial law offenses and, as of mid-December, the regime continued to arrest underground activists. [redacted]

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The "suspension" of martial law reflects the authorities' increased confidence that they have crushed the will to resist as well as their desire to show Western and domestic audiences movement toward normalization. We believe they did not proceed with the full lifting of martial law because of:

- continuing deep concern about persisting underground activity and, perhaps more importantly, possible spontaneous unrest due to the poor economic situation
- distrust of the civilian bureaucracies by military officers, particularly Jaruzelski
- a calculation that the potential economic return to Poland from the West for the full lifting of martial law was not promising enough to justify the security risks. [redacted]

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Assuming there is no significant resurgence of unrest, martial law will be lifted sometime during 1983, perhaps as early as March, as some senior Church officials hope, or possibly as late as 22 July, Poland's national day. The exact timing may become intertwined with regime maneuvering over the Papal visit. [redacted]

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There is no reason to believe that, in the coming months, the nervous, security-minded authorities will ease their efforts to quash the underground press, arrest fugitive leaders, and generally prevent underground organizational work. Jaruzelski in his speech to the nation on 12 December emphatically declared that "anarchy will not be allowed to enter Poland." [redacted]

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Jaruzelski and his moderate advisers realize nonetheless that the populace remains deeply alienated and have consistently said that the clock cannot be turned back to July 1980. Jaruzelski will have some chance, if he is willing and able to use it, to refocus his attention away from what has been his primary goal so far, the destruction of Solidarity, and more toward the creation of a social accord and the introduction of economic and bureaucratic reforms that he has stated are necessary for Poland's recovery. His publicly declared, long-term goal is to create a strong, efficient state bureaucracy that will be able to manage the country effectively and to improve living conditions, thus preventing yet another explosion of public anger. [redacted]

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His initial efforts to reform the economy and to fill the void left by the dissolution of Solidarity, however, have been limited and ineffective. In fact, there probably is a considerable gap between the maximum that Jaruzelski is willing to offer in search of social accord and the minimum that Polish society could find acceptable. Jaruzelski will remain intent on opposing the creation of any institutions with substantial autonomy, and his efforts to improve bureaucratic efficiency do not allow for meaningful inputs from society or restraints on the regime's freedom of action. [redacted]

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Whatever Jaruzelski's personal intentions or desires, he does not have a free hand even though he seems to be firmly in control of the top leadership. He must continue to rely heavily on entrenched party and government bureaucrats who have a stake in maintaining the old system with its often ineffective methods. He doubts the competence of many in the party apparatus, but cannot make wholesale changes quickly, if only because he, as a military man, has to be seen paying some respect to the "leading role" of the party. Even though the number of military commissars overseeing factories will apparently shrink, party-military frictions may increase because the military is likely to continue to wield considerable political power--despite the expectations of many party officials. [redacted]

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We believe that concern over internal security and the enhanced role of the Ministry of Interior will continue to have a

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noticeable impact on Poland's relations with the West. Showing their traditional anti-Western bias, many officials in the security services will argue that the country faces very difficult economic times ahead and that contacts with the West must be tightly controlled. They might argue that former party leader Gierek's efforts to woo the West allowed internal enemies too much freedom, eventually leading to the creation of Solidarity. They probably would also point out that Poland can expect little help from depressed Western economies, and that, even if it were offered, the West would expect in return a degree of liberalization damaging to internal security. [REDACTED]

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Warsaw seems in no mood to make conciliatory gestures to the US. The Jaruzelski regime blames Washington for leading the drive for sanctions and has taken extreme umbrage at some of the statements made by President Reagan and Secretary of Defense Weinberger. Restrictions on USIA and a cutback in contacts with US diplomats probably reflect a calculation that there is little more the US can do to punish Poland and may also be intended to create a bargaining chip for Warsaw. [REDACTED]

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Although the Poles may be prepared for a long, cold spell in their relations with the West, particularly the US, they will not burn all their bridges and probably harbor hopes of splitting the US from its allies. They have frequently admitted that, whether they like it or not, they need trade with the West. They would be interested in beginning talks on official debt rescheduling, especially if this opened up the possibility of new credits. Despite their keen interest in economic aid, they will not make concessions which they believe might endanger their domestic control. [REDACTED]

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